



YOUTH ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM & BEYOND: HISTORY/GOV'T

-MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL (7-8TH & 9-12TH GRADE)-

Activities (7-12th):

THE HISTORY OF RED RIBBON WEEK

Discuss the history of Red Ribbon Week. Research the function of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

- History of Red Ribbon: http://www.justice.gov/dea/ongoing/red_ribbon/redribbon_history.html
- Red Ribbon Facts: http://www.justice.gov/dea/ongoing/redribbon_factsheet.html
- DEA Mission: <http://www.justice.gov/dea/agency/mission.htm>

RESEARCH DRUG POLICIES AND LAW

Research your schools drug policies, as well as, local policies and state laws relating to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Compare those policies/laws with those in other countries.

- ND Century Code (Chapter 5): <http://www.legis.nd.gov/information/statutes/cent-code.html>
- Laws in other Countries:
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/research/pub/dwiothercountries/dwiothercountries.html>

***Variations:**

- Assign a different country to every student. Have the students compare alcohol laws and fines in those countries to the laws and fines in the United States.
- Look at the laws in countries around the world where students' military friends/family members have been deployed.
- Have students research "funny" laws in the United States and in other countries surround alcohol, tobacco, and other drug laws.

HISTORY OF ALCOHOL

Trace the "History of Alcohol" in the United States. Create a timeline of historic events (prohibition, legal drinking age changes, DUI laws). Discuss how alcohol's impact on society led to government interventions and law changes.

Prohibition Video:

http://www.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?title=Alcohol_Prohibition_18th_Amendment_1920_1933&video_id=240519

LAW & ORDINANCES: THE PROCESS

Have students research and learn how local laws and ordinances are passed in their community. Guide them in the process of proposing/passing a law or ordinance which would benefit the community by decreasing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use/abuse. Notify local media of all efforts.

Hint: Have students interview local city officials (city auditor, legislators).

Toolkit to pass a local ordinance:

<http://www.udetc.org/documents/Tool%20Kit%20to%20Pass%20a%20Local%20Ordinance.pdf>

- You can also encourage the students join local community groups and coalitions as extra credit projects in order to get involved in the process of changing laws and ordinances. Here are some laws and ordinances that have been found to be effective:
 - Social Host
 - Mandatory Server Training

COURTROOM SCENARIOS

Hold a mock trial based on an ATOD incident involving a teen. Students write the script and perform the trial for younger students, who serve as jury and rule on the outcome of the case.

***Variation:** Invite an attorney to speak on ATOD laws or real-life case studies of adolescents with ATOD problems. Ask the speaker to discuss how juvenile arrests impact career options, voting privileges, and driving privileges.

Supplement: Looking for more real-world social and legal consequences involving teens? Let “Class Action” guide the process. Borrow “Class Action” from the PRMC

<http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/mentalhealth/prevention/pdf/ebp-catalog.pdf>

Keys to prevention at Middle School age (7-8th grade):

When attempting to intervene positively in the lives of middle school youth, help them gain control of situations and not be controlled by them, it is important to remember what motivates them.

- They are often controlled by the moment, acting first and thinking about it later. What feels good at the moment can easily dictate the choices they will make.
- They are keenly interested in their bodies and appearance, in how to become stronger or more attractive. This interest can provide a natural opening to teach them about the health hazards of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
- They are big risk takers, quick to test limits, break rules and even flirt with death. They enjoy danger and often believe they are invincible.
- They can think abstractly and are sufficiently aware of their own future to see the benefits of education and how their behavior can have long-term consequences.
- They are beginning to see shades of gray and recognize that complex moral issues cannot always be defined in black and white. They are influenced more by their own ability to make moral judgments than by the opinions of those who have the power and authority to tell them what to believe and how to behave.
- They are involved in their friendships. It is through friendships that they explore the world, test out ways of being and behaving, and acquire a sense of both belonging and identity. It is critical that parents, teachers and other adults help them learn how to develop healthy, positive friendships and reject friendships that are unhealthy.
- They want to grow up, but they don't always know how to do it successfully. They definitely need adults in their lives to answer their questions, help with their problems, and generally serve as models of healthy, responsible, mature behavior.

Evidence Based Prevention Strategies: *Correcting Misperceptions of Norms, Increasing Perception of Personal Risk, Life Skills Training, and Connecting to Community Prevention Efforts.*

- Correct the students' misperceptions of norms (exaggerations of use of alcohol tobacco and other drugs). For example, the assumption that "everyone is doing it"
- Build social skills stressing individuation/resisting peer pressure.
- Raise awareness of the dangers of substance abuse and the benefits of positive behavior.
- Emphasize norms that promote healthy lifestyles.
- Make students aware of the influence of advertising on people's use of these substances.

High School age (9-12th grade):

Drug prevention messages must have a foundation of accurate, factual information from which youth can draw conclusions about the dangers and long-term effects of drug-use. Still, there are certain things educators should keep in mind when communicating with high school students about substance abuse.

- They need to continue learning and practicing how to resist peer pressure and to understand the valid reasons for saying "no" to risky behaviors.
- They need to be allowed to make independent decisions and to assume responsibility for choices that affect them and others.
- They need to see that, as citizens, they are responsible for making their communities better, safer places to live.
- They like to explore different sides of issues, examine various interpretations and justify their actions as correct moral choices.

Evidence Based Prevention Strategies: *Correcting Misperceptions of Norms, Increasing Perception of Personal Risk, Promoting Pro-Social Norms, and Connecting to Community Prevention Efforts.*

SOURCES: Real Life Issues Curriculum Infusion, Network for Dissemination of Curriculum Infusion at Northern Illinois University; American Council for Drug Education (ACDE)

